

## **PAEMST Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Eligibility**

1. I taught for two years in a private school and three in a public school. Am I eligible?

**A:** Yes as long as you have five years of full time K-12 teaching experience prior to this academic year, you are eligible.

2. I taught at the university for three years and two years in a public school. Am I eligible?

**A:** No, you must have completed five years of full time K-12 teaching experience to be eligible to apply.

3. If I spend part of the day teaching grade 7 and part of the day teaching grade 6, should I compete at the elementary or secondary level?

**A:** You may choose the level at which to apply.

4. I coach other teachers for part of the day and teach students for part of the day; am I eligible to apply?

**A:** You must be a classroom teacher for at least 50% of the academic day in order to be eligible

5. Does student teaching count toward the five year teaching requirement?

**A:** No, student teaching does not count toward the teaching requirement.

6. I teach my class in Spanish, can I submit my video and application in Spanish?

**A:** Yes, you may submit your video and your application in Spanish.

### **Administrative**

1. What should I put on my resume?

**A:** Your resume should be used to support your narrative responses and should include the required content listed on the application: your educational background, your employment history, and your participation in professional development activities and educational leadership activities.

2. Do the letters of recommendation need to be signed and dated?

**A:** Yes, the letters of recommendation must be signed and dated. Typed signatures are not accepted. If you are unable to scan the letters or upload them to your online application, you can fax them to (800) 427-0139 or e-mail them to [application@paemst.org](mailto:application@paemst.org). We will upload them to your online application and send you an e-mail confirmation once they have been uploaded.

3. Do the letters of recommendation have a page limit?

**A:** There is no page limit for letters of recommendation. A letter with multiple pages must be uploaded as one file. If you are unable to combine multiple pages into one file, you can either fax the pages to us at (800) 427-0139 or e-mail them to [application@paemst.org](mailto:application@paemst.org). We will combine the pages into one file, upload it to your online application, and send you an e-mail confirmation once it has been uploaded.

4. The downloaded Application Packet cites May 1, 2010 as the deadline for submission, but within the online teacher portal May 3, 2010 is the deadline.

**A:** The usual deadline for application submission is May 1 of each year. However, when May 1 falls on a weekend, the submission deadline moves to the following Monday, which this year, is May 3.

## Narrative

1. Does the narrative need to be closely tied to the video?

**A:** Yes, the lesson captured in the video must correspond to the topic or concept chosen in Dimension One. However, the narrative responses may address a series of related lessons beyond the single class seen in the video.

2. Do I need to respond to the Dimensions questions in the order in which they appear?

**A:** Yes, you should respond to the Dimensions questions in the order in which they appear, and each question must be answered individually. The easiest way to make sure your responses are correctly formatted is to download and use the *Dimensions of Outstanding Teaching Template* provided. There are also more detailed instructions in the Written Response screen section under the **Instructions** tab.

## Video

1. My class period is only 30 minutes long. Can I use the remaining 15 minutes to provide supplemental material?

**A:** No, the video must be a single, continuous recording of one class. If your class period is less than 45 minutes, you may not use the remaining time for other purposes. If your class period is longer than 45 minutes, you will need to decide when to start your video during the class, but regardless, the video may not be longer than 45 minutes.

2. I have a video from a previous year. Can I use that one for this application?

**A:** No, your video must be from the 2009-2010 school year.

## Technical Questions

1. I am working on my Teacher Information Form. Even though it seems that everything is complete, the menu still shows this form as “in progress.” Why is my form incomplete?

**A:** Open your form and check that all the fields have been filled in and are complete. Fields cannot be left blank. For example, in the percentage section, if a value is zero, you must enter “0.” Also, check that percentages total to exactly 100 percent. (You must round percentages to the nearest whole number.) In addition, a red mark will appear next to fields containing errors. The related error message will provide information to help you complete the item correctly.

2. Does my resume need to follow the formatting guidelines for the Written Response?

**A:** No, the resume, supplemental materials, and letters of recommendation may have different formatting. However, the font used must be easy for reviewers to read, and the materials should not exceed the specified page limits.

3. Can I upload each of the Dimension responses separately?

**A:** No, your responses to all of the Dimensions of Outstanding Teaching must be saved as a single file and uploaded under the Written Response section on your online application.

4. I began working on the Written Response template, uploaded the file, and clicked on the **Save** button. It is now telling me that I have “completed” the Written Response on the My Application screen, but I still need to edit it. How do I access my Written Response after it has been marked as complete?

**A:** You may still make changes to your Written Response document. When you upload a file to your application, the status will change to “completed.” However, your

application will not be submitted until you click on **Submit Application**. As you continue to work on your application, you may delete documents and upload revised versions to your application.

5. Is there a preferred video format?

**A:** You need to create a DVD with a format that is compatible with video, not a DVD with a data storage format (i.e., do not just copy your .wmv files onto a DVD). The DVD should be playable in a standard DVD player.

6. I mailed my video to my State Coordinator, but the Video Component is still not marked as “complete.” How do I mark this section as complete?

**A:** The instructions in the Video Component section of your online application ask you to fill in the **Date Video Mailed** box with the date that you send the video to your State Coordinator. Once you have entered the date and clicked on **Save**, the progress bar on the main application page should show that the Video Submission is complete.

7. Can I upload 10 *files* or 10 *pages* of supplemental materials?

**A:** You may submit a total of 10 pages of supplemental materials. When the reviewer prints out these materials, he or she should have 10 pages or fewer of supplemental materials for your application. Any additional pages that you provide will not be reviewed.

8. I am having trouble uploading my files to my online application. What should I do?

**A:** Your files may be too large to upload to the system. If you are unable to reduce the size of the file, e-mail your materials to our technical support staff at [application@paemst.org](mailto:application@paemst.org).

9. My Supplemental Materials section still says “not started” or “in progress.” How do I indicate that this section is complete?

**A:** Click on the Supplemental Materials section. Mark the checkbox at the bottom that says, “This is all I intend to include for my Supplemental Materials” and then click on **Save**. This section should now be marked as complete.

10. I need technical help, whom can I contact?

**A:** Assistance is available between the hours of 9 am and 5 pm, Monday through Friday.  
email: [application@paemst.org](mailto:application@paemst.org)  
Toll-free phone: 1-800-209-6327 x2  
Fax: 1-800-427-0139

## **Timeline**

1. How should I approach the application process? Is there a recommended timeline?  
**A:** After you confirm your eligibility, you should read through the entire application packet and review the entire online teacher portal. Plan the lesson or series of lessons you will be addressing in your video and your narrative. Once you have decided on the topic, you should work on the video and narrative in parallel, making sure to reflect on the video throughout your narrative response.
2. I have submitted my PAEMST application. When will State Finalists and Presidential Awardees be notified?  
**A:** For more information regarding the State review process, please contact your State Coordinator. Up to three candidates from each State in each discipline are forwarded on for national consideration, where they will undergo a separate review process. The announcement of the Presidential Awardees will occur sometime in late spring or early summer of the year following your application.
3. When will Presidential Awardees be honored in Washington DC?  
**A:** The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy is responsible for setting the dates for recognition activities, and it depends on administrative scheduling. Awardees will be notified at the earliest possible date.